

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD UR

SUBJ: PRAVDA COVERAGE OF SECRETARY'S TRADE BILL TESTIMONY

REF: STATE 047884

1. IN FOUR-PARAGRAPH 200- WORD TASS ARTICLE ON SECRETARY'S TESTIMONY BEFORE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE, MARCH 9 PRAVDA NOTES TAHT "SPEAKING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE WHICH IS DISCUSSING ADMINISTRATION-SPONSORED LEGISLATION FOR TRADE REFORM, KISSINGER CALLED UPON CONGRESS TO APPROVE THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSALS OF MEASURES TO NORMALIZE SOVIET-AMERICAN COMMERCIAL-ECONOMIC RELATIONS."

2. SECOND PARAGRAPH ASCRIBES TO SECRETARY STATEMENT THAT, "IN EVENT CONGRESS APPROVES AMENDMENTS DENYING AVAILABILITY OF MFN TO USSR, . . . (HE). . . WILL RECOMMEND TO THE PRESIDENT TO VETO THIS LEGISLATION."

3. TEXT OF SECRETARY'S REMARKS EDITED IN THIRD PARAGRAPH TO REFLECT STANDARD SOVIET APPROACH TO ISSUE: "IN RELATIONS
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WITH THE SOVIET UNION, HE SAID, WE ARE CONDUCTING A POLICY

OF RELAXATION OF TENSIONS, SINCE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR AVOIDING THE CATASTROPHE OF NUCLEAR WAR LIES ON BOTH OF OUR COUNTRIES. WE ARE STRIVING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF OUR RELATIONS WITH THE USSR ON A MORE STABLE BASIS AND DERIVE FROM THAT, THAT THEY SHOULD DEVELOP ON A BROAD FRONT. PROVISION OF MFN TO SOVIET UNION IS NOT PRIVILEGE, THE SECRETARY EMPHASIZED, BUT THE REMOVAL OF DISCRIMINATORY ASPECTS OF OUR POLICY, WITHOUT WHICH PROGRESS IN THE DIRECTION OF TRADE NORMALIZATION IS IMPOSSIBLE. REFUSAL TO PROVIDE MFN WILL HAVE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES, WILL PLACE UNDER DOUBT OUR INTENTION TO MOVE FORWARD TOWARD THE IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS, WILL UNDERMINE THE MODEST ACHIEVEMENTS IN ALL FIELDS, AMONG THEM SETTLEMENT OF THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT. THIS WILL IMPEDE REALIZATION OF THE AMERICAN-SOVIET TRADE AGREEMENT."

4. FINAL PARAGRAPH ASCRIBES TO SECRETARY STATEMENT THAT "GOVERNMENT WILL SPEAK OUT AGAINST HOUSE AMENDMENTS TO TRADE REFORM BILL, (AMENDMENTS) WHICH CREATE BARRIERS IN THE PATH OF NORMALIZATION OF SOVIET-AMERICAN TRADE. HE CALLED UPON THE SENATORS TO PROCEED RESPONSIBLY TO CONSIDERATION OF THE LEGISLATION."

5. COMMENT: ELIMINATION OF ALL REFERENCE TO SECRETARY'S REMARKS ON OTHER ASPECTS OF CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST IN TRADE BILL IS IN KEEPING WITH NORMAL EDITORIAL PRACTICES HERE. SELECTION OF EXCERPTS, PARTICULARLY THIRD PARAGRAPH, INDICATES THAT SOVIETS ARE HAPPY TO PLAY BACK ADMINISTRATION WITNESSES' CONCERNS ABOUT POSSIBLE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF ADVERSE VOTE ON MFN/CREDITS. PRAVDA OMITTED ANY REFERENCE TO SECRETARY'S REMARKS ABOUT POSSIBLE NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON JEWISH EMIGRATION OF ADVERSE VOTE. IN PART THIS REFLECTS SOVIET RELUCTANCE TO AIR EMIGRATION ISSUE BEFORE DOMESTIC AUDIENCE. BUT IT MAY ALSO REFLECT SOVIET DESIRE TO AVOID LAYING THEMSELVES OPEN TO CHARGE THAT THEY ARE MAKING AN IMPLIED THREAT-- A CHARGE WHICH THEY MAY CALCULATE COULD HURT CHANCES FOR FAVORABLE VOTE IN SENATE. STOESEL

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